

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A method of operating a computer system to provide a user interface to a data storage system, said computer system including a rule store storing one or more rules, said method comprising the steps:

providing a user interface to said rule store enabling user configuration of said rule store with one or more rules, each rule including information relating to a handler program, said handler program being associated with one or more user requirements and being operable to interact with said data storage system in accordance with said user requirements;

receiving a request detailing one or more user requirements;

responsive to receipt of said request:

a) searching said rule store for a rule associating said one or more user requirements of said received request with a handler program;

b) running said handler program to interact with said data storage system.

2. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said information relating to a handler program comprises the name and the location of the handler program.

3. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said information relating to a handler program comprises the handler program itself.

4. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of running a default handler program to interact with said data storage system if no rule associating a handler program with the one or more user requirements of said received request is found.

5. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein said rule store user interface provision step comprises storing a rule

associating predetermined user requirements with a handler program executable to interact with said rule store to introduce a further rule contained within said request into said rule store.

6. (original) A method according to claim 5 wherein said further rule replaces an existing rule.

7. (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ 1 wherein said request comprises a request to store a handler program.

8. (original) A method according to claim 7 wherein said further handler program comprises a default handler program.

9. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said request contains a rule associating a handler program with the user requirements of said received request.

10. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein said rules are expressed in the form of text.

11. (original) A method according to claim 10 wherein said rules are reparable using a text editor.

12. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein said rules are indicative of a time after which said rules should no longer be applied.

13. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein said data storage system comprises a plurality of databases.

14. (original) A method according to claim 13 wherein said databases are of a different format to each other.

15. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein said rule store user interface is restricted to a certain class of user.

16. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein the data storage system user interface is available to a different set of users from those able to modify said rules in said rule store.

17. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein said computer system comprises a plurality of computers in communication with one another, the handler programs being run on a different computer to the one that receives said request.

18. (currently amended) A method according to ~~any preceding claim~~ claim 1 wherein said computer system comprises a plurality of computers in communication with one another, the rule store being on a different computer to the one that receives said request.

19. (original) A computer system operable to provide a user interface to a data storage system, said computer system comprising:

a data storage system;

a rule store;

a user interface to said rule store operable to enable a user to configure said rule store with one or more rules, wherein each rule includes information relating to a handler program, said handler program being associated with one or more user requirements and being operable to interact with said data storage system in accordance with said user requirements;

request receiving means arranged in operation to receive a request detailing one or more user requirements;

rule store searching means operable to search said rule store for a rule associating said one or more user requirements of said received request with a handler program;

handler program running means operable to run said handler program to interact with said data storage system.

20. (currently amended) A digital data carrier carrying a program of instructions executable by processing apparatus to perform the method steps as set out in ~~any one of claims 1 to 18~~ claim 1.

21. (original) A method of operating a computer system to provide a user interface to a data storage system, said computer system including a rule store storing one or more rules, each rule associating a handler program with one or more request characteristics, said method comprising:

providing a user interface to said rule store enabling the modification of said rules in said rule store;

receiving a request having one or more request characteristics;

responsive to the receipt of said request:

a) finding a rule in said rule store associating a handler program with the one or more characteristics of said received request; and

b) running said handler program to interact with said data storage system.

22. (original) A method according to claim 21 further comprising the antecedent step of storing one or more rules in said rule store.

23. (original) A computer system for providing a user interface to a data storage system said computer system comprising:

a data storage system;

storing means arranged in operation to store one or more rules, each rule associating a handler program with one or more request characteristics;

means arranged in operation to provide a user interface to said rule store enabling the modification of said rules in said rule store;

receiving means arranged in operation to receive a request having one or more request characteristics:

finding means arranged in operation to find a rule in said rule store associating a handler program with the one or more characteristics of said received request; and

running means arranged in operation to run said handler program to interact with said data storage system.